

Serial No.: 09/933,304

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 as being unpatentable over Abe in view of Li, et al. The Examiner has stated that it would have been obvious to modify Abe's method by perforating his layer to form a plurality of perforations and employing Abe's perforated layer/auxiliary layer as a hard mask for the patterning preceding the dry etching as taught by Li because according to Li, the presence of a perforated layer/hard mask layer protects the dielectric layer from damage due to plasma. Applicant has amended claim 8, the sole independent claim, so that it now recites that after the plurality of perforations are formed, the liner is undercut by etching the liner through the perforations. This is not taught or suggested by either Abe or Lie, et al, and accordingly, cannot make obvious the subject claim, as amended.

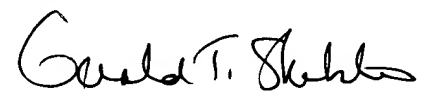
As stated in the application on page 6, the perforations 5 shown in figure 3 permit the metalization area and the auxiliary layer to be easily and quickly undercut in a chemical undercutting movement accompanied by a mechanical polishing movement on top. The result is a reliable and quicker removal of the liner, thus shortening time for the chemical mechanical polishing process.

Reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

With the above amendments and remarks, this application is considered ready for allowance and Applicant earnestly solicits an early notice of same. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

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Respectfully submitted,


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